

8/9/68

Dear Jonn,

Hal did arrive and I finally did hear the tape yesterday, after taking him and Gary to the Archives, doing other things, and returning. I dozed off at one point while listening, then replayed much of it before other guests arrived, hence I have not been able to give it closest attention. Hal will be here for a while, and I'll listen to it again while I dub a dub & this will enable me to consider it in the future, after we know more.

I cannot give you the answer you want because I do not know.

There is nothing I can dispute. It is persuasive. I just have an uneasy feeling about it. It is too unlikely, which should credit it on this subject, where everything is so unlikely.

As you know, I have from the beginning been saying that I believed the job may more likely have been contracted by offer of a bounty than any other way. This would tend to confirm that, for if true, it is not probable that any kind of professionals would operate this way.

Hal will be staying for a while, how long I do not know. Today, when he awakens, I hope to get him reading the three unpublished manuscripts for any suggestions he may have. Mince and Gary read them and flipped over POST MORTEM and COUP D'ETAT. I have added to the latter and will be adding a little more. I did another chapter day before yesterday, have an open one on "The Really Secret Secret Service". V and G think there are urgent, FW the best and hottest yet. Both agree on the need for the book on Lane, which is in unretyped rough. I call it "A Citizen's Descent". Both want me to do a book on Epstein. I can take the formula of the piece I did that Penn reprinted and make a short book out of that in less than a week were someone to take it over at that point and edit, etc. Gary is to get some personal stuff from their classmates at Cornell in this event. I don't want to do it because I so much want to get back to RIGER, but I will if others feel I should. I have added these stipulations: they they assist with pre-writing suggestions on content about him and arrange its publication in advance. I cannot spend all the time in composing more unpublishable things.

I think the time has come for very personal writing. The book on Lane is of that character. I know the intellectual finks will oppose its vigor or the most personal expression, but I have a gut feeling that the time for this sort of thing has returned, particularly on this subject, but I really do not care. It is just that I will not take the time for editing moderation into it. To me a crook is nothing else and I see nothing to be gained by indirection. So, I call him a crook, begin by saying he is and that I shall prove it, and allude to those other characters an overindulgent nature supplied him with ~~xxx~~ in such generous measure and accredit nature. It is very thoroughly documented, with photocopies, etc.

I have made arrangements for a place for Hal to stay in Washington and will encourage him to stay there for a while and work in the Archives, doing first what Paul asked and then going into new materials that I have not been able to exploit but did begin to tap (no one else has done any work in them of which I know). We'll discuss that today, the only undisturbed one we will have had. This is the working papers, gutted before the files were established. I have already impressed on him the importance of not taking laborious notes but of getting copies, and I've turned my account over to him for this purpose. I did arrange for an unscheduled showing of the Z film, showed him the slides and how to use them, and many things I think he was unaware of. He can fill all of you in on his beliefs. We were not able to still clean. Best to all.